

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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PRESS RELEASE

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RICHARD MISRACH: COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS May 27 - July 24, 1988

Large-scale color photographs by Richard Misrach, who since 1980 has photographed the desert landscape and man's presence in it, are on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art through July 24, 1988.

Curator of Contemporary Art Tom Hinson selected fourteen photographs, taken around Palm Springs, California, between 1983 and 1985, from the artist's ongoing work, titled "Desert Cantos." Images from four of Misrach's cantos, or themes, are presented in this exhibition: The Terrain, The Event, The Flood, and The Fires, corresponding to the metaphysical elements of earth, air, water, and fire.

One of today's most important landscape photographers, Misrach uses an 8x10 view camera to achieve remarkable pictorial lushness. Though his sweeping panoramas are akin to those of traditional landscape photographers, there is always some evidence of civilization. Railroad tracks glisten at dusk, interrupting a vast stretch of desert; parked campers squat on glaring, sun-baked earth at Edwards Air Force Base; mirror-like flood waters reflect the tops of trailers and telephone poles.

Misrach sees California's Mojave desert as neither the imagined wasteland of a Bible story nor the sublime spectacle of an Ansel Adams photograph. Misrach's photographs show the actual desert landscape: scarred by highways, telephone lines, and swimming pools. Despite these intrusions, the images are breathtakingly beautiful--golden vistas bathed in exquisitely clear morning or evening light. The works were lent by Fotomann, Inc., New York.